

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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R 141540Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 725
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 2732

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR PARAS FIVE AND SEVEN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, TS
SUBJECT: NOUIRA ATTACKS SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
ADDRESS

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. SUMMARY. IN IMPORTANT ADDRESS
DELIVERED TO SPECIAL SESSION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
COMMEMORATING APRIL 8 DAY OF MARTYRS, PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA
STRONGLY ATTACKED SOCIAL DEMOCRATS FOR THEIR NEGATIVISM,
LACK OF SINCERITY AND OPPORTUNISM, AND LIKENED SOCIAL
DEMOCRATS TO " REJECTION FRONT." NOUIRA'S UNPRECEDENTED
REMARKS REFLECT GOT CONCERN AND IRRITATION OVER SOCIAL
DEMOCRATS' OPPOSITION ACTIVITIES. END SUMMARY.

2. DAY OF MARTTYTTWS TRADITIONALLY AN OCCASION FOR
STATMENT AND SPEECHES, USUALLY BASED ON THEME OF VIRTUES
OF PARTY, WISDOM OF PRESIDENT, AND VALOR OF FALLEN
MILITANTS, ETC. EVENT WAS GIVEN UNPRECEDENTED IMPORTANCE
THIS YEAR AS PRIME MINISTER ADDRESSED A SPEICAL COMMEMORATIVE
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SESSION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, WITH MOST OF TUNISIAN POLITICAL
LEADERSHIP AS WELL AS DIPLOMATIC AND PRESS CORPS IN
ATTENDANCE. ANOTHER UNUSUAL ASPECT WAS THAT NOUIRA
DEPARTED FROM USUAL THEMES; MAIN FOCUS OF SPEECH WAS
SHARP AND REPETITIVE CRITICISM OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS.

3. IN OPENING REMARKS NOUIRA PRAISED PSD AND COUNTRY'S

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AS BEING OPEN TO ALL SOCIAL CLASSES AND DEDICATED TO DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE OF ALL CITIZENRY. HE DESCRIBED SYSTEM AS ALLOWING FOR EXPRESSION OF DIFFERING OPINIONS IN FRAMEWORK OF OPEN DIALOGUE AMONG SOCIAL PARTNERS, ALL WORKING FOR COMMON GOALS. SYSTEM IS BASED ON CONCEPT OF NATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND REJECTS THEORIES OF CLASS STRUGGLE. HE ASSERTED THAT BASIS OF TUNISIAN DEMOCRACY IS "PERMANENT CONSULTATION" AND THAT PLURALISM WITHIN PARTY IS AN "OBVIOUS REALITY."

4. NOUIRA THEN NOTED GROUPS WHICH HAVE FAILED TO RESPECT THIS SYSTEM. HE REFERRED TO THOSE (THE LIBERALS) WHO AT 1971 PARTY CONGRESS IN MONASTIR ATTEMPTED TO "CREATE POWER VACUUM" AND TO OTHERS WHO "IN RECENT MONTHS" UNDER FALSE COVER OF REPRESENTING WORKERS, ATTEMPTED TO WEAKEN CONSTITUTIONAL LEGALITY AND INSTALL THEMSELVES IN POWER. BECAUSE OF THEIR VIGILANCE AND DEVOTION TO AUTHORITY AND PARTY, HE SAID, TUNISIAN PEOPLE DID NOT FALL INTO THIS TRAP; NOW IT IS FOR "JUSTICE" TO HAVE THE LAST WORD.

5. NOUIRA DESCRIBED HOW IN PAST ALL ATTACKS AGAINST PEOPLE AND PARTY WERE BASED ON UNNATURAL ALLIANCES OF CONTRADICTORY EXTREMES AND HE NOTED THAT RECENT TROUBLES HAD BEEN CAUSED BY ALLIANCE OF EXTREMISTS OF RIGHT AND LEFT, INCLUDING REACTIONARIES, MARXIST-LENINISTS, MISGUIDED SYNDICALISTS, ETC. REFERRING TO "OUR ADVERSARIES TODAY,"
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HE LIKENED THEM TO THE ALLIANCE OF OLD DESTOURIANS, SOCIALISTS, COMMUNISTS AND SYNDICALISTS WHO SUPPORTED COLONISTS AND FASCISTS IN 1938 (YEAR IN WHICH EVENT BEING COMMEMORATED TOOK PLACE).

6. REST OF NOUIRA'S SPEECH WAS FOR MOST PART DEVOTED TO HARSH ATTACK ON SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, WHOM HE LIKENED TO A "REFUSAL FRONT." THEY ONLY ADOPT NEGATIVE POSITIONS REGARDING PROBLEMS FACING COUNTRY, HE SAID, AND IT IS CLEAR THAT THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION OF ENTERING INTO DISCUSSION WITH LEADERS OF THIS GROUP. IMPLICITLY, HE ADDED, THIS MEANS THE REJECTION OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS' PROPOSAL TO FORM A "NATIONAL PACT."

7. NOUIRA'S SPECIFIC CRITICISMS WERE NUMEROUS. HE CHALLENGED SOCIAL DEMOCRATS CLAIMED ATTACHMENT TO PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY, AS WELL AS THEIR BEHAVIOR AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHEN THEY WERE IN POSITIONS OF POWER. HE FURTHER CRITICIZED SOCIAL DEMOCRATS FOR THEIR NEGATIVISM, AND FOR THEIR FAILURE TO OFFER THEIR OWN PROGRAMS OR TO EXPLAIN THEIR OBJECTIVES. HOW CAN THEY JUSTIFY, HE ASKED, OPENING THEIR PUBLICATIONS TO "DESTRUCTIVE FORCES"

APPEALING TO CLASS WARFARE (REFERENCE TO SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ALLOWING NOTED TUNISIAN COMMUNIST TO PUBLISH ARTICLE IN ER-RAI ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO). NOUIRA WARNED OF DANGERS OF AGITATING MASSES WITH EMPTY SLOGANS AND STRESSED NEED TO AVOID WEAKENING STRENGTH, AUTHORITY, AND PRESTIGE OF THE STATE. NOUIRA ALSO DERIDED SOCIAL DEMOCRATS CLAIMED REJECTION OF FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, WHEN AT SAME TIME LEADERS OF "SELF ASSERTED" OPPOSITION TRAVEL ABROAD IN SEARCH OF "CONTACTS." THE LEAST THAT CAN BE SAID, HE ADDED, IS THAT THESE CONTACTS CALL FOR "INTERROGATIONS." ARE THEY LOOKING FOR FOREIGN SUPPORT TO HELP THEM GAIN POWER IN TUNISIA, HE QUESTIONED. NOUIRA ALSO WARNED THAT TODAY AS IN 1938 INTRIGUES AND PLOTS ARE BEING HATCHED AND DOCUMENTS AND CONFIDENTIAL

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FIGURES ARE FALSIFIED TO TARNISH THE IMAGE OF TUNISIA AND BOURGUIBA.

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
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8. NOUIRA HINTED THAT SOCIAL DEMOCRATS MIGHT GO TO ELECTORATE IF AN WHEN THEY HAVE A PROGRAM WHICH DOES NOT CALL FOR FOREIGN INTERVENTION. HE SAID "THERE IS NOTHING IN TUNISIAN LAW WHICH COULD PREVENT THEIR

PRESENTING THEMSELVES TO POPULAR TEST SO THAT PEOPLE MIGHT DECIDE." AT SAME TIME NOUIRA APPEALED TO YOUTH IN PARTICULAR TO UNDERSTAND REALITY AND TO JUDGE THOSE WHO SEEK TO EXCITE PASSIONS AND PLAY UPON INSTINCTS AND WHO WOULD NOT HESITATE TO TURN COUNTRY OVER TO HIGHEST BIDDER. HE CLOSED ADDRESS WITH RHETORICAL QUESTION: CAN THERE BE ANY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIBERTY, NATIONALISM, AND PATRIOTISM AND SUCH BEHAVIOR; IS THIS THE WAY TO DEMONSTRATE FIDELITY TO TUNISIA, ITS HISTORY AND ITS GLORIES? NOUIRA OBVIOUSLY BELIEVES THE ANSWER IS A CLEAR "NO". END UNCLASSIFIED.

9. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. NOUIRA'S SPEECH REPRESENTS THE STRONGEST PUBLIC CONDEMNATION OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HE OR ANY OTHER SENIOR TUNISIAN LEADER HAS MADE TO DATE. IT INDICATES THAT GOT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONCERNED AND IRRITATED AT CONSTANT SOCIAL DEMOCRAT CRITICISMS. CONFIDENTIAL

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NOW THAT POLICY HAS BEEN SET, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS CAN EXPECT REPETITION OF THESE CONDEMNATIONS FROM ALL LEVELS OF THE TUNISIAN POLITICAL STRUCTURE. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT A SUMMONS HAS ALREADY BEEN ISSUED CALLING FOR MESTIRI TO APPEAR FOR QUESTIONING UPON HIS RETURN TO TUNISIA. WE UNDERSTAND THAT HASSIB BEN AMMAR (EDITOR OF ER-RAI) IS ALSO BEING INVESTIGATED ON CHARGES OF OFFENDING THE HONOR OF THE MILITARY. END CONFIDENTIAL. MULCAHY

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